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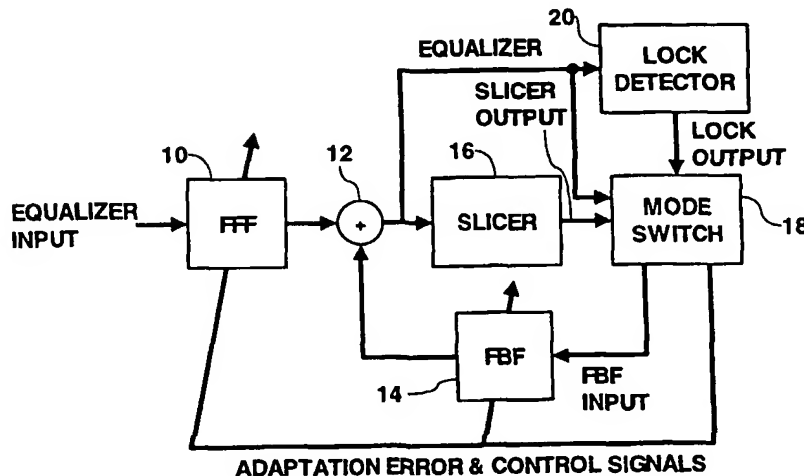
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- (54) Title: EQUALIZER/FORWARD ERROR CORRECTION-AUTOMATIC MODE SELECTOR



(57) Abstract: An apparatus for automatically selecting one of a standard decision directed (dd) mode and a soft dd mode in a decision feedback equalizer (DFE) for receiving a data signal includes an equalizer (30) utilizing forward error correction (FEC) for providing first and second output signals corresponding to a DFE automatic switching mode and a soft automatic switching mode, respectively, and a comparator (36) for comparing byte error rates (ByER) of the first and second output signals for selecting as a superior mode that mode associated with a lower ByER and outputting the output signal with the lower ByER. A lock detector (30) provides a lock signal derived from the DFE output signal with the lower ByER and a mode switch (38) selectively places the DFE outputs in one of the dd modes or a blind mode, depending on the lock signal.

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